

Common Name: **Lavender Cotton**

Genus: *Santolina*

Species: *chamaecyparissus*

Family: Asteraceae

AKA: Cotton Lavander, Garde-robe, Petit Cypres



Historical Uses:

Medical: “It resisteth poison, putrefaction, and heals the bitings of venomous beasts: A drachm of the powder of the dried leaves taken every morning fasting, stops the runnings of the reins in men, and the whites in women. The seed beaten into powder, and taken as worm-seed, kills the worms, not only in children, but also in people of riper years; the like doth the herb itself, being steeped in milk, and the milk drank: the body bathed with the decoction of it, helps scabs and itch.”(1)

“*Pliny* saith, that the herbe *Chamacyparissus* being drunk in wine is a good medicine against the poysons of all serpents and venomous beasts. It killeth wormes either given greene or dry, and the seed hath the same vertues against wormes, but avoideth them with great force. It is thought to be equal with the usuall worme-seed.”(2)

Household: In the 16th century became popular as a hedge material in knot gardens.(3)

Folklore/Astrology: Hot and dry in the third degree.(4) Under the domain of Mercury(5)

Other: Twigs were placed among linens to keep moths away. Arabs are said to have used the juice for bathing the eyes. A perfume oil is extracted from this plant.(6) The name *Santolina* comes from the Latin *sanctum linum*, “holy flax”.



Contemporary Uses:

Parts Used: Leaves, flowering stems. Leaves are picked in the growing season, flowering stems in summer. Both are dried for use in infusions and powders.

Medicinal: “A bitter, stimulant herb with strong, chamomile-like aroma. It reduces inflammation, improves digestion, stimulates the uterus and liver, and expels intestinal

parasites. Used internally for poor digestion, digestive and menstrual problems, worms in children, and jaundice. Externally used for stings, bites, and minor wounds.”(7)

Culinary: “Leaves are used to flavor meat and fish dishes, grains, soups, and sauces.”(8)

Aromatic: Used in potpourris and sachets.

Economic: “Dried leaves are blended with other herbs in herbal tobacco.”(9)

Area of Origin: Mediterranean region

Physical description: Erect to ascending subshrub

Plant type: Perennial

Height: To 24”

Flower color: Yellow, tubular heads

Flowering period: Summer

Soil type/requirements: Well-drained to dry soil

Hardiness zone: USDA 6-8

Sun requirements: Full sun

Propagation: By seed in autumn or spring.
By layering or cuttings in summer.

Sources:

1. Culpeper, p. 83
2. Gerard, p. 1109-1110
3. Bown, p. 359-360
4. Gerard, p. 1109-1110
5. Culpeper, p. 83
6. Grieve, p. 473-474
7. Bown, p. 359-360
8. Ibid
9. Ibid

Illustrations/Images:

1. Fuchs Herbal 1543
2. PSUMG 2012
3. PSUMG 2012

